**Development of ten Desolate islands**

1591. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to develop to desolate islands of Andaman and Nicobar group of islands as tourist spots; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Development and promotion of places of tourist importance is the responsibility of the State Government/UT Administration concerned. However, Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project proposals prioritized in consultation with them. Project proposals submitted by the State Governments/UT Administrations that are complete in all respect, are appraised on the basis of inter-se priority and funds released, subject to availability under the respective heads.

UT Administration of Andaman & Nicobar has identified about 33 number of tourism sites for promotion under Integrated Coastal Zone management Plan. However, no project proposal for development of these sites has been submitted by the UT Administration of Andaman & Nicobar in 2005-06.

**Foreign exchange earned from tourists**

1592. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of tourist inflow to India in the year 2005;

(b) the details of such tourist inflow available with Government from different countries; and

(c) the foreign exchange earned for the period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) An estimated 3.92 million foreign tourists arrived in India during the year 2005.

(b) As per the information provided by the Bureau of Immigration, foreign tourist arrivals from 10 major source markets available for first 11 months of 2005 is given below:—

| Sl.No. | Country | Estimated Tourist Arrivals |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | United Kingdom | 538750 |
| 2. | USA | 521789 |
| 3. | France | 138130 |
| 4. | Canada | 133191 |
| 5. | Sri Lanka | 125690 |
| 6. | Germany | 115730 |
| 7. | Japan | 92998 |
| 8. | Malaysia | 87116 |
| 9. | Australia | 81625 |
| 10. | Nepal | 72031 |

(c) The foreign exchange earnings from tourism during 2005 are estimated to be US$ 5731 million.

**Promotion of Pilgrim Tourism in Rajasthan**

1593. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any policy or plan to initiate and encourage Pilgrim Tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have prepared any list of Pilgrim Centres as prime tourist attractions in Rajasthan;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Centre has allotted special grants/funds to Rajasthan to give boost to Pilgrim Tourism; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/ UT Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified and prioritized in consultation with them every year under the schemes Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits, Product/Infrastructure & Destination Development and Large Revenue Generating Projects.

(c) and (d) There is no specific list of Pilgrim Centres for any State/UT.

(e) and (f) The details of projects sanctioned for development of tourism including pilgrim tourism in Rajasthan during the current financial year are given in the enclosed Statement.